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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125

WEBSITE: <http://commerce.senate.gov>

JOHN KEAST, STAFF DIRECTOR
KIM LIPSKY, DEMOCRATIC STAFF DIRECTOR

March 6, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Howard “Skip” Elliott
Administrator
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao and Administrator Elliott:

Thank you for your dedicated service to advancing the safe transportation of energy and other hazardous materials. As members of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, we look forward to working with you to promote the mission of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

As you know, the Protecting Our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act (PIPES) of 2016 reauthorizes PHMSA’s pipeline safety programs through the end of fiscal year 2019. In considering reauthorization this Congress, it has come to our attention that the proposed rule for *Pipeline Safety: Safety of Gas Transmission and Gathering Pipelines*, Docket No. PHMSA-2011-0023—which addresses Congressional mandates from the Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-90)—has not yet been finalized.

This rulemaking has the potential to substantially impact the pipeline system by overhauling PHMSA’s gas transmission regulations and better promoting pipeline safety technologies. Given its significance, we ask you to expedite the completion of this rulemaking so that Congress may account for its changes to gas transmission pipeline safety in discussing the reauthorization of the PIPES Act. We also urge you to keep the Committee fully apprised of PHMSA’s progress in completing the gas transmission safety rulemaking.

Thank you for your continued focus on this important issue and consideration of this request. Your continued partnership in promoting pipeline safety is truly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Roger F. Wicker
Chairman, Committee on
Commerce, Science, and
Transportation



Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member, Committee on
Commerce, Science, and
Transportation



Deb Fischer
Chairman, Subcommittee
on Transportation and Safety



Tammy Duckworth
Ranking Member, Subcommittee
on Transportation and Safety